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Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

Note verbale dated 8 September 2008 from the Permanent Mission of Cameroon to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cameroon to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), and has the honour to submit herewith the national report of Cameroon on implementation of the resolution (see annex).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 8 September 2008 from the Permanent Mission of Cameroon to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

[Original: English]

Report of Cameroon on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) to the Committee

As member of the United Nations and other international organizations, Cameroon is highly concerned with issues that threaten international security and peace, especially the proliferation of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, as well as taking measures to ensure that these weapons do not fall into the hands of non-State actors, especially terrorists.

The Government of Cameroon has decided that its Ministry of External Relations shall handle and follow up the implementation processes of resolution 1540 (2004).

It would be important to stress at the beginning of this report the fact that Cameroon is neither a producer nor possessor of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, but does not neglect the fact that its territory can be used to transport these dangerous substances, taking into consideration the country's strategic position as a crossroads in the Gulf of Guinea.

On the above-mentioned basis, Cameroon has undertaken a series of international engagements and has embarked on a number of national legislations that will address resolution 1540 (2004).

The country has signed and ratified a number of international treaties, conventions and laws to make sure that its territory is not used as a testing ground or a transit territory for chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and to prevent these dangerous weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists.

The Government of Cameroon has also taken strong anti-terrorist measures since the 11 September 2001 bombings in the United States of America.

I. Nuclear and chemical sphere

At the international level, Cameroon is a party to the following instruments:

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, ratified on 6 February 2006

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, signed in 1993 and ratified in 1997

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, ratified on 8 February 1969

Cameroon became a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency in 1964, and has signed the following multilateral conventions: Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage which entered into force in 1977

Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (16 February 2004)

Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (2006)

Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency

The country is also signatory to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization since 9 September 2001.

At the national level, a draft decree on the creation, organization and functioning of the National Authority to ensure the putting in place of the 13 January 1993 Convention on Chemical Weapons is in the pipeline. This draft has not only taken national realities into consideration, but has greatly addressed the concerns of resolution 1540 (2004) on the control of national boundaries and international cooperation in the fight against the proliferation of chemical weapons, as well as the necessary sanctions.

According to the draft, a life imprisonment sentence and a fine of CFAF 100,000,000 is the sanction any individual or group that is in possession of chemical or nuclear weapons incurs.

A 25-year term of imprisonment and a fine of CFAF 10,000,000 to 25,000,000 sanction persons caught at the point of manufacturing, stockpiling, holding, conserving, importing, exporting, helping to transit or dealing in the commercialization of such chemicals.

Besides, by Decree No. 2002/250 of 31 October 2002, the Head of State created a Radio-Protection Agency in Cameroon. This Agency is already operational with the appointment of its first Director General, Professor Robert Nimba, in 2007. It has, as its principal objective, the control and the safe use of authorized radioactive materials on the national territory.

II. Biological weapons

At the international level, Cameroon neither produces nor possesses biological weapons, and has signed the Treaty on Biological Weapons.

At the national level, Cameroon will soon develop national legislation to monitor the importation, use and control of biological weapons on its territory.

III. Boundaries

It would be important to note that Cameroon has a very long land boundary that poses a problem of control, but much effort is being made to overcome this with the putting in place of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, whose major role is delimit the existing boundaries between the two countries in order to monitor the transit of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

(a) At seaports, the Government has put in place modern equipment to check containers at their entry and exit. This includes the scanners at Douala seaport which is the main seaport in Central Africa. Cameroonian experts often undergo training and recycling courses in order to better use the above-mentioned equipment.

(b) The Douala and Nsimaien international airports are also well equipped with scanners to check for drugs and other dangerous substances and respect all the international norms on airport safety.

The Republic of Cameroon also participates in the following export control regimes:

The Missile Technology Control Regime

Australia Group

Nuclear Suppliers Group

Zangger Committee

Wassenaar Arrangement

IV. Fight against terrorism

Internationally Cameroon has signed:

International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 17 December 1979 (ratified on 9 March 1988)

Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, signed in Vienna on 3 March 1980

International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1997 (ratified on 21 March 2005)

The country has ratified many of the conventions and protocols of the United Nations on matters of terrorism and abides by its resolutions, among them:

Resolution 49/60 of 9 December 1994, on measures to eliminate international terrorism

Resolutions 50/53 of 11 December 1995, 51/210 of 17 December 1996, 52/165 of 15 December 1997 and 53/108 of 8 December 1998 are all being implemented by Cameroon

Cameroon is a leading member of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) and as such has signed all regional conventions which are in line with global efforts for international security and peace. Some include the accord on air transport between member States, the External Navigation Code of CEMAC signed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 17 December 1999, the Additional Act of 14 December 2000, creating an Action Group against money-laundering in Central Africa, and Agreement No. 01/03-CEMAC-UMAC on the prevention and repression of money-laundering and financing terrorism in Central Africa (signed in Yaoundé on 4 April 2003).

At the national level the country has come up with legislation that has evolved to answer the threats terrorists are posing all over the world in respect of resolution 1540 (2004) and make sure that dangerous weapons do not fall into terrorist hands.

Law No. 87/059 of 7 August 1997, on the control of drugs and precursors and their trafficking, and Law No. 2001/019 of 18 December 2001, to fight and punish

any acts committed against civil aviation, are all measures aimed at fighting terrorism.

Decree No. 2005/197 of 31 May 2005 created a National Commission for the Fight against Corruption, to fight corruption in all its forms, so as to better monitor the use of stolen money and prevent some of it being used to finance terrorist activities around the world.

Decree No. 2006/088 of 11 March 2006 added powers to monitor corrupt practices, which can go a long way in sponsoring terrorist activities. During the same year, the National Agency for Financial Investigation came into operation to fight against money-laundering in Central Africa.

The expected adoption of the draft law on chemical weapons will strengthen Cameroon's set-up in combating international terrorism.